

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT

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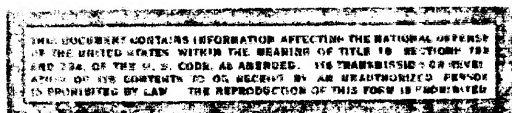
COUNTRY East Germany
SUBJECT Reactivation of the Democratic Bloc

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1. After the events of 17 June 1953, it was announced, among other things, that the parties of East Germany should hold regular "Democratic Bloc" meetings. This had initially been requested by the NDP, the CDU and the LDP. The SED agreed unconditionally to the reestablishment of the long suspended Bloc activity, although this had not been considered under the New Course.
2. A meeting of the "Democratic Bloc" on the party executive committee level was held at the beginning of September. At this meeting statutes for the future work of the "Democratic Bloc" were formulated. Basically it was proposed that the "Democratic Bloc" do the preparatory work on legislation, and criticize government measures and developments so that unanimity would prevail as the principle of political activity. It was further agreed that the "Democratic Bloc" should meet at least once a month and a rotating chairman would propose the topics for discussion as desired by the various members of the "Bloc". It was also agreed that the "Democratic Bloc" would be reactivated on subordinate governmental levels--Bezirk and Kreis--for monthly meetings.
3. In practice the "Democratic Bloc" has met on the highest level only once since then--during the early part of October. Hermann Matern, a member of the SED Politburo, acted as chairman. He rejected all the discussion topics which had been submitted by the other parties (the SED did not submit any) with the remark that all these topics were being discussed by the East German cabinet and that it would be inexpedient to discuss them as long as the cabinet had not reached any conclusion regarding them. Matern also remarked that the experiences of the weeks after 17 June, during which time suggestions and plans were formulated by all parties, had shown that many projects had been publicized which indicated that responsible thought in relation to a sensible and possible economic and security policy for East Germany was lacking. It was high time, Matern stated, that this "project-making" came to a stop.
4. Matern proposed agendas for the future meetings of the "Democratic Bloc" which were consistent with East German government policy. The "Democratic Bloc" could not become an arena, where certain party groups which felt that they had not received sufficient consideration could put on a show. For this reason he stated he was against the immediate reactivation of the "Democratic Bloc" on lower levels. The individual parties

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must first give basic instructions to their functionaries, so that the "Democratic Bloc" would not become an institution which would indicate to political enemies outside of East Germany the poor status of the country.

5. The CDU, the LDP and the NDP had submitted suggestions and plans for discussion at lower level "Democratic Bloc" meetings which could not have been discussed during the past three years.
6. A committee composed of three members from the executive committees of the CDU, the LDP and the NDP is to be formed which will meet with the SED and Semenov with the object of motivating Soviet intervention to force the quickest possible reactivation of the "Democratic Bloc".

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